

Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Alagar R. Venkataswamy. I am a resident of Middletown.

I am testifying in support of a rent cap and in support of HB 6588, with changes to better protect tenants.

In our apartment complex - consisting of two buildings, with about 170 apartments - the tenants are experiencing monthly rent increases amounting to anywhere from a minimum of \$100 to \$200, during the last three years.

This - needless to say - is far beyond the amounts that could be construed as reasonable given the increases in recurring expenditures, for the landlords.

Many tenants, most of them seniors, had to move - some of them to other towns, and even out of state - since they could not afford to pay these increases, given all of them are on a fixed income. The Cost Of Living Adjustments of their Social Security incomes are not in par with these exorbitant/unreasonable rent increases.

It is not easy for a senior citizen to search for new places to live, to pack up and move (that also involve additional unforeseen expenses), leaving behind friends, and family, that result in mental, and physical anguish.

There have also been instances (in 2020) of this landlord here asking some senior tenants to move without any "good cause", with an ulterior motive, to increase rents exorbitantly in between tenants.

It took the intervention of the then state Representative Quentin Williams, and the members of the General Assembly writing a letter

(<https://www.housedems.ct.gov/sites/default/files/Phipps-StonegateLetterFinal.pdf>)

to the management (citing State statute Sec. 47a-23c of chapter 832) for them to desist this illegal practice.

A reasonable cap on the rent increases would certainly have prevented such predicaments as above, and financially, and otherwise help these senior citizens.

I strongly support a rent cap; but HB 6588 would be stronger with the following changes:

- The cap should be lower - in the 2.5 or 3% range. This tracks pre-pandemic average rent increases and would be affordable and predictable to tenants.
- It should cover apartments in between tenants so landlords can't push out tenants to increase the rent.
- It should expand good cause eviction protections to cover all tenants so they have greater stability in their homes.

Sincerely,
Alagar R. Venkataswamy
Middletown, CT